2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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F.	Patrilineal clan	(exogamous; widespread)
G.	Phratry	(endogamous or sometimes exogamous; widespread)
H.	Moiety	(endogamous or sometimes exogamous; Nilgiri-wide)
I.	Badaga community	(generally endogamous; Nilgiri-wide)
J.	Fourteen *kolas* or septs	(exogamous; in popular belief, South- India-wide)

THE JOINT PATRILOCAL FAMILY

592 [611] The Badaga family is always patrilineal and nearly always patrilocal. Because of the power it wields a joint family is the ideal and every third generation typically passes through this desired state. Thus a young couple establish a new home in the village of [591] the groom's father. Their children, if male, should remain in the same house with their parents, or be married into another village if female. Then the young men take brides from villages of affines, bring them to the parental home and raise their children there. At this juncture there would be three generations living under the same roof: (1) unmarried grandchildren, (2) unmarried daughters, [591] married sons and their wives, (3) the parents. On the death of the founding father the brothers are expected to leave his house and establish separate homes. The dispersal of the household has three causes—architectural, legal, and psychological. The first is that [342 362] Badaga houses have only two or three fairly small rooms and by the time that three generations, two of them with spouses, are occupying one house there is an acute shortage of space—a situation which may be aggravated by polygyny. The legal cause [428 736] of dispersal is ultimogeniture: Badaga law requires that the youngest son inherit his father's house and at the same time take care of the widowed mother (Rivers, 1906, 559-560). Financial provision should be made for all older brothers to build separate [362 593] houses. The psychological causes are the total lack of privacy and the elder brothers' uneasy feeling of indebtedness to the youngest brother who legitimately owns the house. A further complication is that in recent years one brother working in an office has become

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Secondly, these treatments have descended through many generations of therapists in the different villages. What are the implications of this? Badaga villages are exogamous, and marriage is virilocal. When a woman becomes a therapist, who then is she likely to learn from? As we shall see with Sithamma, who was not atypical in this respect, she learns from her husband's mother, or from some other older woman who is married into his village. This must make for some confusion occasionally. Perhaps a small girl learns the identities of many plants around her natal village, and may even acquire some basic cures from her mother or other women living in that village; but she only begins formal training as a therapist *after* marriage, which means that she is then living elsewhere, being indoctrinated into a possibly different set of practices and identi-

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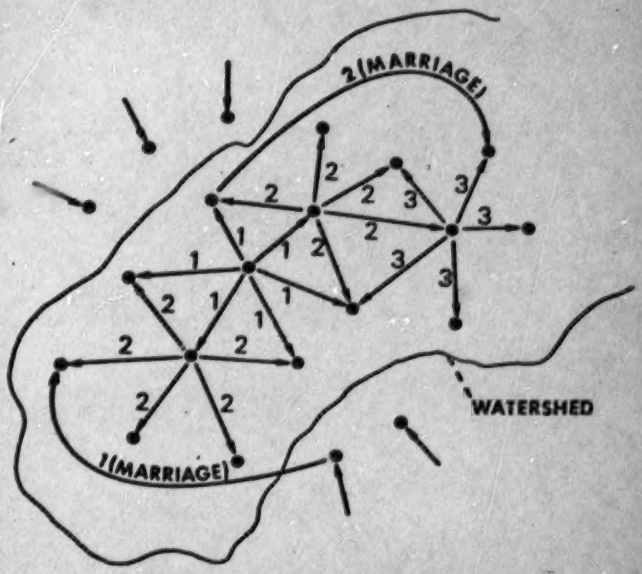

Diagram 3 : Schematic illustration of the spread of medical knowledge through some neighbouring Badaga villages during three professional lifetimes of therapists (ca. one century)

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fications than those she had picked up as a girl. Yet the older therapist sees to it that a trainee cures according to the traditions of her husband's hamlet. The rule of virilocal residence means that each village which has a therapist tends to retain some idiosyncratic patterns of curing, and to transmit them more or less unchanged through succeeding generations in that village alone. We must remember that some three-quarters of all the therapists are female.

But what of the male therapists? They are patrilocal in residence and hence just accentuate the effect I have already described: they too transmit a curing pattern that has long been idiosyncratic in their own village (cf. 10.12). And since therapists are secretive about their knowledge anyway, and would not compare cures between one village and another as a rule, there is no basis for a common medical tradition in Badaga culture. Even the male specialists who attract clients from all over the Nilgiris tend to rely on secret spells and secret herbal remedies, so that their knowledge also remains solely in their own hamlets and occasionally may provide some subsidiary income for generations of a particular family. In fact, it should be clear now that what I have recorded in this study is largely the medical system of Orana:yi village, where the informants The singh and his mother Sithamma lived, and of the immediately contiguous hamlets where she practised. It is true that a therapist or a midwife does visit such neighbouring hamlets, but this does not negate my hypothesis. It simply means that instead of there being theoretically 370 medical systems (i.e., the number of Badaga villages) there are probably between 50 and 100 (i.e., the number of practising therapists); and each is very locally restricted.

A model for the diffusion of Badaga medical knowledge over several generations is sketched in Diagram 3. Topography conditions this pattern very much, for the Nilgiri Massif is fragmented into many small valleys, and these *tend* to be exogamous because they were mostly colonized in the first place by members of one particular clan. Idiosyncratic therapeutic information thus tends to remain within a valley over the generations, where of course it will be based on and adapted to the flora that are locally available (cf. 1.4). To the extent that this information is in the hands of womenfolk it becomes a service that they provide mostly for their affines, and along with ceremonial reciprocity, money-lending, and the all-important arrangement of marriages, is a factor in the linkage of diverse lineages and clans.

582 614 but are not vegetarians. In most parts of India anyone claiming to be a Brahmin and practicing vegetarianism would consider it a great dishonor to take a wife from -- or worse still, to marry his daughter into -- a family of meat-eaters generally acknowledged to hold lower status in the social hierarchy. It is true that marriage between Gaudas and Haruvas is not very common; but the reason lies not in any abhorrence of the idea on the part of the Haruvas, but largely in the inconvenience such a marriage causes a meat-eating family who find themselves obliged to prepare only vegetarian dishes, and in separate vessels, whenever a Haruva affine (581) is visiting them. When a Haruva man marries a Gauda girl, it is usually because (583) he owns little or no land; in such a marriage the bride's father is likely to give the (591) Haruva land in that Gauda hamlet and encourage the couple to settle down there. Such a procedure commonly occurs when the bride's father has no son of his own; but even if he has sons they may be agreeable to the arrangement when land is available. This is the only situation in which Badagas practice uxorilocal residence.

262 562 614 Despite the general rule among Badagas that a woman assumes the status and joins the sib of her husband's family, marriage between vegetarian Haruvas and non-vegetarian Gaudas does not mean that the wife has to assume her husband's dietary habits. If a Haruva girl marries a Gauda, then no meat is ever cooked in his house and the wife remains a vegetarian. If her husband wants to eat meat, he will perhaps arrange to have some cooked elsewhere and eat it outside his own home. The children of this union are fully Gaudas, however, and will normally be non-vegetarians. Once the Haruva woman has died her husband's household normal- (783) ly revert to a non-vegetarian diet. It has been reported that, "If a Badaga [i.e. Gauda] woman marries a Haruva she has to give up meat-eating and, to cleanse (753) her, a red hot iron is put to her tongue" (Benbow 1928: 9). "After this she would

who fled from that situation and settled on the hills as Badagas (i.e., "northerners") came mainly from the agricultural Okkaliga caste in the Mysore Plain. What their social organization may have been there is obscure and irrelevant. It seems that the small groups of refugees, torn from their caste affiliations, were so fragmented that the basic social unit among them as settlers was the joint family, not the *jati* or caste. It is still the ideal residential unit.

Today we find no castes in Badaga society. These people live in a tribal milieu, surrounded by the indigenous Toda, Kota, Kurumba, and Iruḷa tribes, and they have become fairly tribe-like themselves. The community is divided into ten phratries which are mainly endogamous. Two of these are vegetarian; all are primarily agricultural. Each phratry is made up of a number of exogamous clans, anything from two to sixteen of them, and these clans are in turn segmented into quite a few exogamous lineages. As with the famed Nigerian case of the Tallensi, there are actually lineages within lineages, so that we may need to speak about maximal (*kuḍumbu*), major (*kutti*), minor (*kutti*), and minimal (*guppu*) lineages, even though not every clan currently has all four levels of lineage. Segments of the minimal lineages are in fact extended families, counting back for about five generations, and with most of their members still alive.

These larger social units have a complicated history and organization (detailed in Hockings 1980), and they will not be considered further in this present study. It is nonetheless relevant to mention how they fit into the residence pattern. The Badagas live in about 370 exclusively Badaga villages which are normally exogamous. Marriage is virilocal. Each village is thus the home of one or more patrilineages all belonging to one clan (and hence, one phratry). But with few exceptions a clan is not confined to a single village.

One particular village, Tu:ne:ri, was the first place to be settled, in the late 16th century, as a result of which its headman became the paramount chief. This position, like all Badaga headmanships, has descended patrilineally within the family. Every other village has its own headman, descended from the founder, and clusters of neighbouring villages form a commune around one particular village whose headman is also acknowledged to be the commune headman. Furthermore, the whole of the plateau area has been divided into four quarters, and one man is recognized as the regional headman in each quarter. At every one of the four levels of headmanship there is also a council, made up of inferior headmen (except in the case of the village council, which consists of lineage elders who work with the traditional village headman).

The society is relatively homogeneous in the sense that, although the ten phratries are ranked into a widely accepted hierarchy, all families were traditionally subsistence farmers of millet and all lived by essentially the same kinship rules. We will therefore be able to explore the meaning of these rules without constant reference to exceptions and alternatives found only in certain sectors of the society.

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

(amongst others) either his FZD or his MBD, but there is a marked preference for a FZD and some good reasons for it.[3] One involves a feeling of status congruence. Men, it is believed, demean themselves somewhat by becoming bride-givers. This is acknowledged nowadays by the payment of dowry, a new custom among the Badagas. But a young man's spiritual guide is not the family priest in this community; instead it is always his MB, whom he calls *guru* and also accords much respect. It is thus incongruent if that particular man should give his daughter in marriage to the very boy he has counselled. Marriage with a FZD, or with the daughter of a MB other than one's *guru*, gets around this emotional problem.

Patrilocality is another preference that is usually spoken of as an unbending rule. Yet there is in point of fact a term, *aḷiya se:tu*, for the live-in son-in-law, a young man who opts to live with his wife's family after their marriage. This is considered an undignified and pitiful thing to do, but it can bring real material advantages to a man whose wife has no brothers, and is a necessary alternative to virilocal residence in such a family. The epic ballad *Ba:la Sevana* deals with a man who moves into his father-in-law's village to help with the buffaloes, leaving his own mother in her village lamenting the loss of her only son, and bemoaning her fate since "there will be nobody to set fire to her corpse." It is interesting to note that Ba:la Sevana married into the Kunda region, one that used to be so economically distressed that its children were often sold into bondage for a period of years, thereby becoming the household servants of Badagas in other parts of the Nilgiris. The live-in son-in-law was one institution that helped make up for the loss of male children in those bad years, when bondage was the only answer to the threat of starvation in that region.

2. Patriliny and Patrilocality

Today the Badagas are successful cash-crop farmers specialising in cabbages, potatoes, and tea; those of the Kunda region are the wealthiest in the District. Until the early part of this century, on the other hand, they were all mainly farmers of millet. This and several other grains, together with dairy produce, provided their subsistence. When one delves further back in their history, to the 17th and 18th centuries when they were already well established on the Nilgiri Hills but with a population of under 2,000, one finds that the Badagas were already millet farmers yet thought of themselves as primarily buffalo herdsmen. This is reflected very clearly in a number of their epic ballads dating from that time. Since each family or lineage used once to have its own herd of buffaloes, then it is legitimate for us to consider

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[3] Letters placed in single apostrophes, 'A', 'B', 'C', etc.; stand for hypothetical people and are like personal names. Letters placed in double quotation marks, e.g. "M," "F," etc., indicate classificatory rather than actual kin relationships, and should be read as "in the category of mothers," and so on. Z = sister, S = son, etc.

B: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

the kinship system in the Badaga case as having developed as a means of assigning and transferring ownership of and rights in property, especially cattle and houses, but to a lesser extent land too. We must remember that in the early days Badagas practised swidden agriculture (although strangely that is not mentioned in the early ballads), and the Nilgiri population density was so low that land really had no market value there and was very easy to come by.

Now, keeping a herd of buffaloes requires adequate grazing and certain other conditions. One is the presence of a number of active men, typically brothers, who will keep the herd together while grazing and fend off tigers when possible. Women could not do this work: the epic poem *Ba:la Sevana* ridicules the mother of the hero for trying to drive the family's herd out to graze with a stick in her hand. Both swidden and ordinary plough agriculture also called for the combined efforts of several men (as well as a number of women), and so here too Badagas found a good reason for cultivating their fields as a joint family. Many still do so today. The point to be noted is that both the buffalo-herding and ox-ploughing and swidden cultivation were economic conditions that favoured patrilocality, the joint family, and brother/sister exchange at marriage—this latter a preference which maintained a balance of manpower between two intermarrying families or settlements. If a youth married his FZD and her brother in turn married *his* MBD, brother/sister exchange would result, the ideal of cross-cousin marriage would be honoured, the two families involved would have asserted their equality, and close relations would ensue between them. Where brother/sister exchange has occurred, divorce becomes rather more difficult because it places great strains on the other couple, those who are not getting divorced.

The girls in this system invariably go off to another village in marriage at or shortly after menarche, where they will be needed to *(a)* do house-work and look after small children; *(b)* do some sowing, weeding and reaping in the fields; and *(c)* raise a new generation of farmers and buffalo herdsmen. In this married situation the birth of a son means that a woman has largely fulfilled all three of her obligations to the family she has joined—for on marriage a Badaga girl relinquishes membership in her natal family, lineage, and village, and joins those of her husband. Her membership in them is made especially manifest when her husband dies and a son continues to support her in her husband's village; and when she too dies it is her husband's village and its headman who are responsible for conducting her funeral, with the collaboration of her husband's family.

The economic decision-making rests with the adult men: when to sow, what to plant in each kind of soil, when and where to move the cattle in search of new grazing, when to harvest, and, in former times, when to move the swidden. These decisions call for accurate topographical knowledge, and it is thus both appropriate and necessary that the detailed local knowledge which boys acquire in work and play should be put to good use when they

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

become householders—in their natal villages, that is. Women are never expected to make such decisions. Hence patrilocality is a principle of survival, a fact which is reinforced by the phenomenon of repeated divorces that might take one woman in her lifetime as a bride to two or three different villages, in each of which she would be something of a novice with regard to the local ecological conditions.

For a male, membership of his father's lineage—whether maximal, major, minor, or minimal—is inalienable. There may nowadays be little or no assertion of the solidarity of an individual with his lineage during his entire lifetime, but yet the tie remains. Some lineages do however still maintain in common a herd of buffaloes.

For females the descent situation is rather less clear. A woman at marriage joins the family and hence the lineage of her husband. This connection is not inalienable, on the other hand, for divorce may easily rupture it. The term for affines *(nantan-natta)* is applied by a man's family to all of his wife's natal family and lineage; it is similarly applied to all the agnatic relatives of any potential wife. This is a commonplace in Dravidian kinship systems. Among Badaga women we also find that a wife calls her own parents and brothers *nantan*, and in anticipation of a certain married future may even use this term in reference to them while she is still a small, unmarried girl, just as her potential husbands would.

3. The Affines

The community based on patrilocal residence is a moral entity in which deference is enforced by authority. Relationships with one's agnates are always extensive and carefully maintained, and this contrasts with the narrowness of affinal relationships. The two categories are further differentiated in behaviour by the fact that a male can be fined by the village headman if he does not show the proper respect due to an agnate, and primarily to a member of his own village; but there is no fine for lack of respect to an affine.

Badagas have a saying, "There is no relationship among affines." This simply means that Ego does not always recognize generation levels among his affines. What *is* important, here as elsewhere in the kinship realm, is the age differential. Take, for example, the unexpected situation (Diagram 1) of

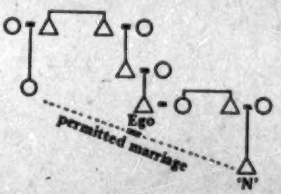

Diagram 1

If more than one have to receive the *Linga* on the same day each of them has to undergo this ceremony. After the ceremony is over the priest returns to his village with the rice, &c., and fees. Every house in which a boy has received the *Linga* has to give a grand feast that day. Even the poorest Badaga must feed five other Badagas at least.

Thus closes the Linga-wearing ceremony of the Badaga boy, after which he passes through no additional ceremony. He spends his time now in milking the buffaloes, now in the fields, and is thus always preparing himself to become in the future the responsible head of a Badaga family.

Before we speak of the ceremonies connected with the courtship and marriage of a Badaga youth and of those which are due to him at the time of and after his death, which we shall dwell upon at their proper place, we shall turn our attention to a Badaga female-child and trace her from her birth to her marriage. As soon as a female-child is born, some of her relations who are in a position to contract a marriage relationship bespeak the baby, and arrange for her to be married at the proper age to such and such a boy. In consideration of this they give Rs. 10 as a fee. This is everything to the girl and her price cannot afterwards be enhanced even though when she grows up she may be worth more—even as much as Rs. 200 which is the highest rate prevailing among them. Even when a girl is thus bespoken, all the forms connected with the courtship and marriage which I am about to describe are observed except the one of handing over the price of the girl, which in such a case has already been paid. This custom of contracting relationship is rare but it does occur in ten out of a hundred cases. Violations of this kind of marriage are considered very ungentlemanly but they are not infrequent. The fine for such violations is after all very light, being merely the return of the Rs. 10 formerly paid for the girl when the infant was bespoken.

Let us now go back to the baby and suppose her not to be thus bespoken. She has no rites or any observances to undergo till she becomes of a marriageable age. She then leaves her parents' house and goes to a building called the *Hola-Gudi*. This *Hola-Gudi* is a public place reserved exclusively for women and grown up girls, and is a building that every Badaga village contains. She is presented with a new cloth by her parents and remains in the *Hola-Gudi* till the next full-moon day. All the families in the village bring to her one measure of wheat or *Koraki* flour from each